Economic growth rate

4084. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY : Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the I.M.F. has lowered its growth projections for India for 2003;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by Government in this regard so as to maintain the growth as originally projected ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ANAND RAO VITHOBA ADSUL) :(a) and (b) The International Monetary Fund (IMF) in its World Economic Outlook (April 2003) has projected a real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of 5.1 per cent for 2003 (calendar year) compared with its earlier projection of 5.7 per cent for India. The revised growth projection is based on the IMF's perception of the anticipated growth in different sectors of the economy.

(c) The Union Budget for 2003-04 has proposed a number of initiatives such as promoting infrastructure development by leveraging public money through private sector participation, promoting private investment and measures aimed at fiscal consolidation. These initiatives are expected to have a positive influence on the growth of the economy.

Waiving duty on import of life saving drugs

4085. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA : Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have received a request from the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) for waiving duty on life saving drugs and security related imports; and

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN) : (a) In their pre-budget memorandum CII had quoted, with approval, the recommendation of the Task Force on Indirect Tax, that the duty should be nil on life saving drugs, government imports for defence, security etc.